

# California Water Desalination Task Force

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## ? Task Force established by AB 2717, Hertzberg (Statutes of 2002)

- **Purpose** – to identify potential opportunities and impediments for using seawater and brackish water desalination and to examine what role, if any, the State should play in furthering the use of desalination technology. DWR to report finding to the Legislature by July 1, 2004.
- **Membership** – AB 2717 listed 22 agencies, groups and special interests to be represented on the Task Force. DWR added five more groups to bring the total Task Force membership to 27. The membership reflects a statewide variety of interests and perspectives concerning seawater and brackish water desalting, including: federal, state and local resource/regulatory agencies; consumer and environmental advocacy groups; municipal/urban water districts and regional water supply and groundwater management agencies; industrial interests; academic institutions; and nonprofit associations.
- **Approach** – Task Force proposes to conduct its work in two phases (funding permitting).
  - ? **Phase 1** (currently underway) – will focus on: identifying and thoroughly describing the key issues, concerns and other impediments associated with desalination; identifying existing safeguards and successful approaches for dealing with the issues; identifying data/information gaps that present an impediment to the use desalination technology; and, determining what role, if any, the State should play in closing the data gaps and furthering the use of desalination.
  - ? **Phase 2** – will focus on solutions, recommendations and approaches for dealing with the key issues identified in Phase 1, and will identify the State role, if any, in furthering the use and utility of desalination in California.
- **Meetings** – Phase 1 of the Task Force process (issues assessment phase) will be conducted over five meetings between May and October 2003 (see Table below). The meetings will be held at various locations throughout the State.
- **More Information** – See <http://www.owue.water.ca.gov/recycle/desal/desal.cfm> or access the DWR main portal at <http://www.water.ca.gov/> and click the link “Water Desalination Task Force” under “Recent News”.

## ? Key Issues Associated with Desalination

- **Permitting Complexities and Regulatory Issues**
  - ? Uncertainty over information needed for regulatory review
  - ? Improved efficiency and timeliness of regulatory review process
- **Energy Related Issues**
  - ? Amount of energy required to operate a desalination facility
  - ? Available energy supplies/projected demands from desalination facilities
- **Economic Issues**
  - ? Direct and indirect costs of desalting of ocean or brackish waters vs. other water management strategies
  - ? economic impact and potential impacts of the desalination industry on state revenues.
  - ? Impacts on and opportunities for low-income communities
- **Facility Planning Issues**
  - ? Growth Inducement
  - ? Opportunities and impediments to co-locating facilities with coastal power plants using once-through cooling
  - ? Potential opportunities to provide environmental benefits
- **Siting Issues related to Desalination Facilities**
  - ? Environmental justice considerations

- ? Facility and infrastructure compatibility with existing or planned land uses and possible constraints to development
  - **Feedwater Intake Issues**
    - ? Entrainment and impingement impacts related to marine organisms
    - ? Source water quality and its impacts
  - **Product Water Distribution and Concentrate Outfall Issues**
    - ? Distribution system impacts
    - ? Ecological impacts of brine disposal in a marine environment
  - **Public Health Issues**
    - ? Consumption of product water
    - ? Air quality impacts of operating a desalination facility
- ? How can desalination contribute to biodiversity?
- Reduced pressure to import water through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and from the Colorado River could result in increased in-stream values and improved water quantity and quality

### **Desalination Task Force - Phase 1 Meetings\***

<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Location*</b>	<b>Issues to be Addressed</b>
May 29, 2003	Sacramento	Purpose of the Task Force, Issues Assessment Report, and Summary of Key Issues
June 24-25, 2003	Carlsbad	Plant and Infrastructure Siting, Feedwater Intake, and Distribution and Outfall
July 29-30, 2003	Sausalito	Energy and Economics
August 26-27, 2003	Monterey Bay area	Planning, Regulatory and Permitting, and Public Health
October 17, 2003	Fontana (Inland Empire Utility Agency)	Synthesis of Desalination Issues and Next Steps

*\* Subject to change*